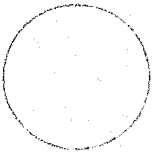


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**COMMUNITY POLICING AND  
PROBLEM SOLVING,  
THE GLENDALE ARIZONA  
EXPERIENCE**

**NCJRS**

**JUN 29 1992**

**ACQUISITION**

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## INTRODUCTION:

In 1988, the command staff of the Glendale Police Department made some decisions concerning the future of our organization. We decided to make a conscious effort to incorporate community policing and problem oriented policing into our structure.

As an introductory step, then Assistant Chief Robert Forry made a site visit to Newport News, Virginia to evaluate their progress with problem oriented policing. From that visit Chief Forry developed an introductory training course for all employees of the Glendale Police Department. This course gave all members an introduction to problem solving and the SARA Model<sup>1</sup>.

In November of 1990 I attended the first Problem Oriented Policing Conference in San Diego. This was an attempt to learn more about what was happening with problem oriented policing around the country. I came away quite enlightened and a firm believer that more needed to be done within our organization if we were going to make P.O.P. work. Specifically, we needed to address the issue of lack of support for the program at the supervisor/ manager level. No program will succeed without the support of the line level supervisors and managers. If those supervisors and managers have the proper training and a good understanding of the program, they would be more likely to support the efforts of the officers as they try to solve problems.

Thus began the implementation and development of an overall "master plan" for a program that we call Community Oriented Problem Solving. While we are still refining some parts of this plan we have, at this writing, completed the department-wide training for application of problem solving.

What follows is a synopsis of the steps taken to plan for, develop and implement the training process for all employees.

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<sup>1</sup> Herman Goldstein, (1990), *Problem-Oriented Policing*, New York: McGraw-Hill.

## ***A PARTNERSHIP:***

While at the Conference in San Diego, I met Commander Jim Palmer of the Tempe, Arizona Police Department. Commander Palmer and I had several conversations over the course of the conference, and many more after returning from San Diego. Tempe P.D. shares many of the same interests and goals that we have and also had been working toward a Community Based Policing/Problem Solving program. The result of these conversations and meetings was a plan to develop a joint training program using the resources of both organizations. Tempe was also working very closely with the Institute for Law and Justice in relationship to a grant they had received. I.L.J. proved to be a very beneficial partner in this project.

From those first meetings came two, three day, training sessions. It was our intention to train all first line supervisors, sworn and non-sworn, as well as those people within the organization that would be responsible for continuing the training program. Thus developed the target group for the joint training sessions. From this group of individuals would come the department trainers, who would then be responsible for the internal training program. These "trainers" would be responsible for developing the training package from what they learned in the initial sessions.

The agenda for the Tempe/Glendale training sessions consisted of Aurora Colorado Division Chief Ron Sloan, addressing the history and philosophy of Community Policing as well as the Aurora Experience, San Diego PD Commander Jerry Sanders, and in a later class, Reno PD Captain Ron Glensor addressing the supervision of problem solving, and San Diego PD Project Consultant for Problem Oriented Policing, Nancy McPherson, covering SARA and it's application. We drew upon talent within Tempe and Glendale for topics such as, customer service, working with neighborhoods, crime prevention and crime analysis. The two original sessions were so successful, and the feedback so positive that a decision was made to conduct a third session. This session was opened to outside agencies due to the number of requests and inquiries.

Tempe Assistant Police Chief Ron Burns, Commander Jim Palmer, Glendale Lieutenant Randy Henderlite and I then began the process of planning for our internal training programs. Because of some difference in department objectives it was necessary, at this stage, to tailor the programs more closely to the long term goals of the individual organizations.

### ***THE TRAINING PROGRAM:***

Early on we identified the need for trainers to be individuals who had a high degree of credibility with their peers. It was not necessary for these employees to be in supervisory positions although first line supervisors and field training officers were well represented in the group. Because some of the employees chosen had not instructed before, or were not certified to conduct police training programs, it was necessary to arrange for them to receive police instructor certification by attending the Instructor Training Course sponsored by the Arizona Law Enforcement Officers Advisor Council. During this training phase, we submitted our training course syllabus to A.L.E.O.A.C. for approval for Advanced Officer Training credit at the state level. This seal of approval was necessary to allow our agency to credit the training toward the yearly mandated police officer training requirement as well as allow us to apply for training funds from A.L.E.O.A.C., (thus receiving reimbursement for some of the expense).

Once the volunteer-trainers were identified and had completed the initial three day training session, meetings began to develop the in-house training program. With the facilitation of Lieutenant Henderlite, the group of trainers, who now represented all major areas of the department, began to develop their program. The class length was fixed at one 6-8 hour session. Class attendance was mandatory for all employees of the Department. A decision was made to mix the participants of each class so that employees from several different divisions would be represented in each class. It was believed that this would provide for better interaction during workshops. As it turned out, this was a good decision.

Training for all employees was completed the first part of December 1991. Each employee received training in the history of traditional policing, customer service, community policing as a philosophy, problem solving as a strategy, resources available and the SARA Model. Several hours were devoted to group problem solving sessions. Half way through the training sessions, over two dozen new problems had been identified by employees who were putting their training to work by Scanning and Analyzing in their area of responsibility.

## ***THE MASTER PLAN:***

Shortly before the beginning of the training sessions I began working on a paper that I referred to as the "Master Plan". In effect, it was a statement of a mission with goals and objectives to be accomplished in various areas of the police department. The Master Plan addresses several areas that are important to success of the program. It became apparent from what I had observed, that without some set direction for the implementation of C.O.P.S. and the necessary foundation, we would wander aimlessly. I thought it important that we attempt to keep things on track, while making sure that everyone involved understood that this was not an overnight process. Many changes would be necessary and change takes time.

Like most traditional police departments, it would be necessary to change a number of areas of "traditional" police practices. One of those practices was the issue of recruitment and training. Because we were beginning our semiannual recruitment process we incorporated questions on community policing into our interviews for new recruits. In addition, our Implementation Team (made up of C.O.P.S. Trainers, Lt. Henderlite who had been assigned as the C.O.P.S. Program Coordinator, and myself), began the organization of a Training Subcommittee which would be responsible for employee training, from recruitment to Advanced Officer Training. This subcommittee, as well as all others, would be made up of several members of the " C.O.P.S. trainers", and others within the department that had responsibility for the areas in question.

The Implementation Team had been formed at the beginning of the training sessions. The main purpose of this team was to see that any and all changes made within the police department were done with Community and Problem Oriented Policing in mind. The team would be advisory in nature and any conflicts would be resolved by the management team: however, the purpose of having an assistant chief on the team was to speed the decision making process.

The second area was policy and procedure. While we have not begun the process of policy evaluation for C.O.P.S., it is evident that this will be a difficult process. On the other hand, we have toyed with accreditation for several years now, and more recently the Arizona Association of Chiefs of Police has proposed a state accreditation process. Internally, we are well on the way toward conversion of our policy to the accreditation model. The emphasis with problem solving is less written policy, allowing employees the freedom to be innovative and free thinking. The idea with accreditation is more written policy giving employees clear guidelines for their actions. The two ideas clash, and this change will be a difficult area for traditionalists as well as problem solvers.

Organizational culture is the third area of consideration. Shortly after Bob Forry became Chief he placed an emphasis on development and publication of a mission statement and goals for the department. What followed was a statement that was strongly worded focusing on community policing and problem solving. Total organizational training in problem solving/community policing had been accomplished and the department's management team never left a doubt in contacts with our employees, other city employees and the public as to our course of action for the coming years. Our organizational culture is well established.

The fourth area of the Master Plan is the allocation of resources. The organizational goal is to allocate resources to support community policing. The group who will be carrying out this particular goal will be responsible to insure: 1) the internal auditing process is done with the goals of community policing and problem solving in mind; 2) ownership of geographic areas is emphasized; and 3) there is a smooth flow of information and data to those areas and persons that are scanning for problems. Again, there is the inevitable collision of the traditional methods and the present day problem solving methods. It will be difficult for some to see that response time to calls will not always drive our allocation of resources.

One of the most important areas for the success of this program is that of recognition and evaluation. Police organizations have never been good about recognition. Probably because of the para-military background, we assume that the satisfaction of the job is enough for employees. In the case of problem solving, it is very important that the employee, and others who help solve problems, receive credit and recognition for their efforts. Evaluations must be tailored to direct and recognize efforts and internal and external media should be used to credit not only the police employees, but the other government employees and community members who work to solve problems. This group of individuals will be responsible for directing the redesign of evaluation forms, assisting the Excellence Committee, which is already in place, evaluating commendable employee actions, and recognizing good problem solving and community efforts. Obviously, the Public Information Officer became a charter member of this subcommittee.

Finally, the Master Plan addresses the community relations programs with the thought of expanding on the number of programs that put us in touch with the community and becoming involved in the planning stages of projects that have the likelihood of affecting the need for police services. We have the usual programs in place as well as a number of innovative programs that have been instituted over the years. We also have begun to seriously look at new programs such as the Citizen's Academy which has been used successfully in many communities. While these programs deal specifically with Community Relations, programs such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) have a direct and future impact on police resources and problem solving. This particular working subcommittee will have a broad base within the department.

## ***THE FUTURE:***

Like everything else in this project, the Master Plan is fluid. I anticipate that there will be changes and modifications as we develop new ideas and find that we need to expand our original areas of focus. I have tried to prepare those members working on this project for the inevitability that some things will need modification. Modification to some people equates to a mistake. But, I have tried to emphasize that "there are no failures" in this project only successes and learning experiences. It is important to the project that those working in various areas and committees see some progress and results. Long periods with limited results and small changes will tend to temper the initial enthusiasm. At the same time, changes should not happen just "to happen".

Two areas of concern have become evident as we progress. The primary concern is the need for a full time coordinator and secondary, but just as important, is the need for a smoother flow of data to those who are responsible for analyzing.

Because of budget constraints, we have not been able to add a full time coordinator to the staff. Lieutenant Henderlite has done an admirable job in coordinating the progress of the Department's course toward our goals. But, he has also had to devote time to his patrol shift and other duties that he is assigned. Some arrangements will have to be made to provide for a full time C.O.P.S. coordinator. My job is to find a way to make those arrangements.

Once again, finances and other job duties have restricted the flow of data to employees who are identifying problems. Our one crime analyst has more assigned projects than she has time to complete. This is a problem to all of us. The solution has been to train all shift corporals in the use of our data retrieval system. Because each patrol squad has a corporal, the corporals have been trained in the use of the information retrieval system and given the job of "collator" for the squad. Collators will have the responsibility of assisting the officers on their squad in obtaining the necessary data to analyze and document noted problems. This process will take some coordinating with the shift sergeant, as will the allocation of time for the officers to work on problems. Teamwork will be paramount for each squad.

There is one point that has become very evident from all of this. The departments that tell their community that they are practicing "Community Policing" or "Problem Oriented Policing" and have done little or nothing other than given the programs lip service, are fooling themselves and doing a disservice to their community. There is much more involved in making the programs work than talking about them. Our department will be making the programs work for many years to come. The process never ends.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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